

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 RSC-01 SCI-06 SCEM-02 AEC-11 PM-07

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R 301812Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5154

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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VIENNA FOR IAEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, TECH

SUBJECT: URANIUM ENRICHMENT

REFS: A) STATE 231932; B) PARIS 30527; C) STATE 233866; D) PARIS

30640

SUMMARY: FRENCH NUCLEAR PLANNER SAID THAT ANY COOPERATION WITH US
IN GASEOUS DIFFUSION TECHNOLOGY WOULD BE MULTILATERAL IN SCOPE,
LIMITED TO IMPROVEMENT IN PROPOSED TECHNOLOGY, AND IMPLEMENTED
ON COMMERCIAL BASIS. NEXT MOVE IS UP TO AMERICANS AND TIME IS
SHORT. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTTEL SCIATT CONTACT GIRARD ON NOVEMBER 28.

GIRARD, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF NUCLEAR PLANNING IN J. COUTURE'S TOP LEVEL SECRETAIRE GENERAL DE L'ENERGIE OFFICE, STATED THAT COOPERATION WITH US ON ENRICHMENT TECHNOLOGY MIGHT STILL BE POSSIBLE IF : (1) BASED ON MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK, I.E., BETWEEN US AND EURODIF, THOUGH CONVERSATIONS COULD COMMENCE ON GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL; (2) CONCEIVED AS MEANS TO IMPROVE PROPOSED EURODIF PLANT, AS OPPOSED TO SUBSTITUTING US PLANT FOR EUROPEAN PLANT; (3) CARRIED OUT ON COMMERCIAL BASIS, I.E., DIRECT DEALINGS EVENTUALLY BETWEEN EURODIF AND US FIRMS.

2. FOR GIRARD, THE POSITIVE DECISION BY EURODIF PARTICIPANTS (REF. B) PUT FRENCH IN FAR STRONGER POSITION THAN EARLIER. HE HAD COMPLETE CONFIDENCE THAT EURODIF CAN BUILD PLANT WITH OR WITHOUT US COOPERATION. THEREFORE HE SAID IT WAS UP TO USG TO MAKE OFFER (I.E., BALL AS IN THE US COURT). SUCH AN OFFER COULD BE PRECEDED BY DISCUSSIONS INITIATED QUIETLY ON GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL. WHATEVER THE FORM, ANY US PROPOSAL SHOULD BE CLEARER THAN AEC RESPONSE TO WYART GROUP AND MORE FORTHCOMING. TIME IS PRESSING AS HE EXPECTED THAT BIDS FOR CONTRACTS WOULD SOON BE COMING OUT.

3. IN MORE RELAXED VIEN, GIRARD OPINED THAT RATHER THAN THE LIMITED TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL US-EURODIF COOPERATION, WHAT IS REALLY NEEDED IS COOPERATION BETWEEN WESTERN EUROPE AND US ON ALL ASPECTS OF ENRICHMENT. HE WAS THINKING NOT ONLY OF TECHNOLOGY BUT ALSO OF MARKETING. HE CONFESSED HIMSELF SKEPTICAL THAT THIS WOULD EVENTUATE DESPITE HIS BELIEF THAT COMPETITION ON ENRICHMENT BETWEEN WESTERN COUNTRIES, AT THIS DIFFICULT PERIOD, IS SELF-DEFEATING. HE WAS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF AEC TERMS FOR TOLL ENRICHMENT DESCRIBING THESE AS LESS FAVORABLE THAN SOVIET TERMS, AND AS MAJOR FACTOR LEADING THE EURODIF PARTNERS TOWARDS EVENTUAL AGREEMENT.

3. COMMENT: TWO THINGS STOOD OUT IN GIRARD'S REMARKS: HIS CONFIDENCE IN EURODIF'S FUTURE AND INSISTENCE ON MULTILATERAL NATURE OF EURODIF. WITH APPARENT WITHDRAWAL BY SWEDES (REF. D) AND NO AGREEMENT ON COST BREAKDOWN (TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT EURODIF MEETING SOMETIME BEFORE CHRISTMAS), HIS OPTIMISM MAY NOT BE JUSTIFIED, COMBINING GIRARD'S REMARKS WITH USG POSITION THAT BALL IN FRENCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COURT (REF. C), US AND EURODIF SEEM TO BE PLAYING GAME WITHOUT BALL, I.E., TWO RECEIVERS IN SEARCH OF A SERVER. GIRARD'S CRITICISM OF AEC ENRICHMENT TERMS WAS ECHOED IN STRONGER TERMS ON TELEVISION BY CEA ADMINISTRATOR GIRAUD, WHO SAID HE DID NOT KNOW OF ANY CONTRACT THAT OBLIGES CONSUMER TO COMMIT HIMSELF FOR 18 YEARS AT PRICE DECIDED UNILATERALLY ON DAY OF DELIVERY. GIVEN CEA'S DETERMINATION SINCE EARLY 1971 TO BUILD PLANT, THE TWO STATEMENTS APPEAR TO REFLECT GOF PUBLIC POSTURE TO EXPLAIN

EXPENSIVE PROJECT.

HOWEVER, THE EFFECTS OF AEC TERMS SHOULD NOT BE UNDER-
ESTIMATED. GIRARD'S OPINION ABOUT US-WESTERN EUROPEAN COOPERATION
ON ALL ASPECTS OF ENRICHMENT DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT OFFICIAL
POSITION SINCE IT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY REQUIRE GOF REVIEW AT
POLITICAL LEVEL BEYOND GIRARD'S MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL AND
SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT.
STONE

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